

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 07733

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, GE. WB, UR

SUBJECT: BERLIN AFTER THE BREZHNEV VISIT

REF: A) BONN 7321; B) BONN 7381; C) BONN 7567;

D) BERLIN 909

SUMMARY: WEST GERMAN OFFICIALS WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED
IN RECENT DAYS BELIEVE THAT THE GERMAN- SOVIET DISCUS-
SION OF BERLIN DURING THE BREZHNEV VISIT AND THE RESULT-
ING COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE (REF A) PROVIDE A SOLID BASIS
FOR CONTINUING FRG EFFORTS TO INSIST ON STRICT APPLICA-
TION BY THE USSR OF FEDERAL PRESENCE AND FOREIGN REPRE-
SENTATION PORTIONS OF THE QA. SOVIET REPS ARE TAKING
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THE OPPOSITE LINE (REF C) IN CLAIMING THAT THE SITUATION AFTER THE VISIT IS ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED. WHILE AGREEING THAT A FINAL JUDGMENT MUST AWAIT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, THE EMBASSY TENDS TO SEE LOGIC IN THE FRG VIEW THAT WHILE SOLID IMPROVEMENTS MAY NOT BE GUARANTEED THE GERMAN BARGAINING POSITION HAS BEEN IMPROVED. END SUMMARY.

1. BASIS FOR GERMAN SATISFACTION OVER THE TREATMENT OF BERLIN DURING THE BREZHNEV VISIT IS THE FACT THAT THE FRG SIDE SUCCEEDED IN FORCING CONSIDERATION OF THE TOPIC AT ALL. THE SUBJECT WAS CLEARLY DISTASTEFUL FOR THE SOVIETS. CHANCELLOR BRANDT HAS DESCRIBED TO AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND THE DIFFICULTIES HE ENCOUNTERED IN EVEN HAVING BERLIN PUT ON THE AGENDA (REF B). THE SOVIET ATTITUDE WAS ALSO MIRRORED BY PRESS SPOKESMAN SAMYATIM WHO, EARLY IN THE VISIT, REPLIED TO A JOURNALIST'S INQUIRY ABOUT TREATMENT OF " BERLIN PROBLEMS" BY SAYING: " YOUR QUESTION IS ARTIFICIAL. THE FOUR POWER AGREEMENT DOTTED THE LAST I IN THIS REGARD. THERE IS NO LONGER ANY WESTBERLIN PROBLEM."

2. THE RESULTING DISCUSSIONS WERE OBVIOUSLY NOT EASY. IN ADDITION TO THEIR LONG- HELD POLICY OBJECTIVES IN THE CITY, THE SOVIETS CLEARLY BELIEVED THAT THE FRG HAD BEEN OVERLY AGGRESSIVE IN ATTEMPTING TO DEMONSTRATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRG- BERLIN TIES IN RECENT MONTHS. THIS VIEW HAS BEEN REPEATED TO US SEVERAL TIMES BY SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES IN BONN AND HAS, INCIDENTALLY, ALSO BEEN PUT FORWARD IN SEVERAL FRG NEWSPAPER COMMENTARIES ON THE BREZHNEV VISIT. AFTER HAVING MADE WHAT THEY CONSIDERED TO HAVE BEEN AN IMPORTANT COMPROMISE IN THE QA, THE SOVIETS PROBABLY BELIEVED IT WAS NOW THE TURN OF THE FRG ALSO TO BACK OFF A BIT IN AREAS SUCH AS TERMINOLOGY (" LAND BERLIN").

3. WHAT WAS ACHIEVED WAS A PASSAGE IN THE COMMUNIQUE WHICH DID NOT EVEN CONTAIN THE WORD BERLIN, REFERRING INSTEAD ONLY TO THE " FOUR POWER AGREEMENT OF SEPTEMBER 3, 1971". NOR WAS THERE ANY MENTION, AS ORIGINALLY DESIRED BY THE GERMAN SIDE, OF THE NEED FOR MAINTENANCE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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DEVELOPMENT OF FRG- BERLIN TIES. IN FACT, AT FIRST BLUSH, THE RESULT DOES SEEM MEAGER; THE TWO SIDES AGREED ONLY THAT " STRICT ADHERENCE TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF" THE QA WERE A " SIGNIFICANT CONDITION FOR LASTING DETENTE IN THE CENTER OF EUROPE AND FOR AN IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE STATES CONCERNED, PARTICULARLY BETWEEN THE FRG AND THE SOVIET UNION". BASED ON THIS LANGUAGE,

IT COULD BE ARGUED THAT THE TWO SIDES MERELY AGREED TO
RESERVE THEIR POSITIONS ON THIS IMPORTANT QUESTION.

4. HOWEVER, IN THE GERMAN VIEW, THE DISCUSSIONS AND
THE RESULTING COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE HAVE, AT A MINIMUM,
THE FOLLOWING POSITIVE IMPLICATIONS:

A) BY RAISING BERLIN WITH THE SOVIETS ON SEVERAL
OCCASIONS AT SEVERAL DIFFERENT LEVELS, THE FEDERAL
REPUBLIC MADE CLEAR THAT THE PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE BEEN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 07733

EXPERIENCED IN RECENT MONTHS WERE NOT JUST THE DOINGS
OF FOREIGN OFFICE LAWYERS. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
STRESSED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL THAT BERLIN WOULD BE A

TOUCHSTONE FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN GERMAN- SOVIET RELATIONS. THE CHANCELLOR HIMSELF MADE CLEAR THAT GERMAN- SOVIET RELATIONS WOULD BE " POISONED" IF PROBLEMS CONTINUED IN BERLIN. THUS, IT SHOULD NOW BE CLEAR TO THE SOVIETS EACH TIME THEY WISH TO CAUSE DIFFICULTIES IN BERLIN, THAT THE HIGHEST LEVELS IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE A NEGATIVE VIEW OF SUCH GOINGS ON.

B) BY AGREEING TO DISCUSS BERLIN AND BY AGREEING
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TO INCLUDE MENTION OF THE SUBJECT IN THE COMMUNIQUE, THE SOVIETS ACCEPTED, ALBEIT INDIRECTLY, THAT THERE HAD BEEN DIFFICULTIES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE QA. THEY CAN NO LONGER CLAIM THAT QUESTIONS ABOUT DIFFICULTIES IN BERLIN ARE " ARTIFICIAL".

C) THE BONN COMMUNIQUE WAS THE FIRST COMMON GERMAN- SOVIET STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT OF BERLIN. THE FRG THUS HAS SOVIET ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACT, IN THE FORM OF A JOINT STATEMENT, THAT RELATIONS MAY BE AFFECTED BY PROBLEMS IN BERLIN. THIS WILL PROVIDE THE FRG WITH THE BASIS FOR COMPLAINTS TO THE SOVIETS IF THINGS DO NOT DEVELOP SMOOTHLY.

5. SUCH ADVANTAGES CLEARLY NEED NOT PRESAGE MORE MODERATE SOVIET BEHAVIOR. THE GERMAN PRESS AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ITSELF MAY INDEED, AS NOTED BY A SOVIET EMBASSY REP (PARA 2, REF C) HAVE MISJUDGED WHAT THE SOVIETS WERE SAYING. WE DO, HOWEVER, AGREE WITH THE JUDGMENT OF FEDERAL OFFICIALS THAT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BRANDT- BREZHNEV DISCUSSIONS AS FAR AS BERLIN WAS CONCERNED LAY NOT IN WHAT WAS AGREED OR DIS- AGREED, BUT IN THE FACT THAT THE GERMANS MADE CLEAR TO THE SOVIETS THEIR INTENTION TO TIE FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN GERMAN- SOVIET RELATIONS TO PROGRESS OR THE LACK THEREOF ON BERLIN- RELATED MATTERS.

6. A FURTHER IMPLICATION OF THE BONN DISCUSSIONS IS THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS INDIRECTLY ASSUMED MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEMANDING CORRECT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FEDERAL PRESENCE AND FOREIGN REPRESENTATION SECTIONS OF THE QA. GENERALLY, THIS IS IN ALLIED INTEREST, SINCE IT HAS IN OUR VIEW NEVER BEEN IN THREE POWER INTEREST TO BECOME INVOLVED IN ARGUING WITH THE SOVIETS OVER WHAT ARE BASICALLY FEDERAL GERMAN INTERESTS IN BERLIN. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE BELIEVE SOME CAUTION SHOULD BE EXERCISED IN MAKING SURE THAT THE FRG DOES NOT SEE ITSELF BECOMING THE MAIN SOVIET PARTNER CONCERNING THESE TWO PARTS OF THE QA. THIS DEVELOPMENT HAS ALREADY BEEN IMPLIED BY SEVERAL PRESS REPORTS WHICH BASED THEMSELVES

ON " INFORMED GOVERNMENT SOURCES". THE RESULT COULD BE
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THAT THE THREE POWERS WOULD BE PRESENTED BY THE FRG WITH
WHAT WAS IN EFFECT A FINAL DECISION ON INTERPRETATION OF
A SPECIFIC PART OF THE QA, WHICH HAD BEEN WORKED OUT
BEFOREHAND BETWEEN THE SOVIETS AND THE FRG.

7. THE BEHAVIOR OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL, THERE-
FORE, BE CRITICAL IN DETERMINING THE REAL BENEFITS OR
LACK THEREOF WHICH WILL RESULT FROM THE BREZHNEV VISIT.
FRG NEGOTIATORS WILL PROBABLY TAKE THE WORDING IN THE
COMMUNIQUE AS A MANDATE FOR INSISTING ON THEIR INTER-
PRETATION OF RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE QA. IF ONE IS TO
BELIEVE THE WORDS OF LOCAL SOVIET REPS (REF C), THE
RESULT COULD BE FURTHER CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE FRG
AND USSR AND CORRESPONDING FRICTION BETWEEN THE FRG
AND GDR OVER BERLIN CLAUSES IN FOLLOW- ON AGREEMENTS TO
THE BASIC TREATY. THIS WILL BE THE POINT WHEN THE FRG
WILL HAVE TO DEMONSTRATE WHETHER OR NOT THE CHANCELLOR
REALLY MEANT WHAT HE SAID ABOUT A POSSIBLE POISONING OF
FRG- SOVIET RELATIONS OVER BERLIN. IF THE FRG DOES
REMAIN FIRM, AND IF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO
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